

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 OIC-02 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

USIE-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 EA-07

FRB-03 INR-07 IO-13 NEA-10 NSAE-00 OPIC-03 SP-02

TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 AGRE-00 OMB-01 /080 W

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O 011820Z MAR 77

FM USMISSION OECD PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASH DC IMMEDIATE 5513

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OECD, ECON

SUBJECT: TIMING OF OECD MINISTERIAL

REFS: (A) OECD PARIS 4810, (B) OECD PARIS 4012,

(C) OECD PARIS 5300

1. SECGEN REPORTED TO HEADS OF DEL ON FEBRUARY 28 THAT INFORMAL SOUNDINGS INDICATED GENERALLY NEGATIVE REACTIONS TO POSSIBILITY OF HOLDING MINISTERIAL IN EARLY MAY OR IN APRIL (REF A). WITH RESPECT TO ALTERNATIVES, SECGEN THOUGHT JUNE 22-24 DATES SUGGESTED BY BRITISH IN LETTER CIRCULATED AMONG PERMREPS (REPORTED TO ALBRECHT EUR/RPE BY PHONE) WERE ENTIRELY FEASIBLE SINCE THOSE DATES PROVIDE (A) ADEQUATE PAUSE FOR HARD-PRESSED SENIOR OFFICIALS AFTER HEAVY SCHEDULE OF SPRING MEETINGS, (B) MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR SECRETARIAT TO PRESENT MINISTERS WITH NEW ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT AND FORECASTS FOR NEXT 6/L2 MONTHS AND ENABLE MEETING OF EPC TO BE HELD PRIOR TO MINISTERIAL (C) COME SUFFICIENTLY AFTER CIEC MINISTERIAL SO THAT MINISTERS COULD REFLECT IN FUTURE-ORIENTED WAY ON CIEC RESULTS. SECGEN NOTED THAT BRITISH HAD ALSO

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SUGGESTED MID-JULY DATES, BUT HE FELT JULY WOULD BE INCONVENIENT FOR MANY COUNTRIES.

2. ENSUING DISCUSSION REVEALED NO DELEGATION WITH EXCEPTION OF AUSTRIAN HAD AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT THE JUNE DATES NOW, ALTHOUGH GENERAL REACTION TO THOSE DATES WAS POSITIVE. CANADIAN DEL POINTED OUT THAT DATES

OF CIEC MINISTERIAL WERE NOT YET FIRM, WITH LATE MAY REMAINING LIKELY; HE ALSO NOTED THAT LATE JUNE OECD MINISTERIAL COULD PROBABLY BE COMBINED WITH THE PROPOSED EARLY SUMMER IEA MINISTERIAL. CONFIRMING THIS LATTER POINT, SECGEN SAID JUNE 22-24 DATES PROVIDED GREAT FLEXIBILITY: OECD AND IEA MINISTERIALS COULD BE HELD BACK-TO-BACK OVER THE THREE DAYS, FOR EXAMPLE, IEA MEETING JUNE 22 AND OECD MEETING JUNE 23 AND 24 FOLLOWING PATTERN OF L975 MEETING; OR OECD MINISTERIAL COULD BEGIN ON AFTERNOON OF FIRST DAY AND END AT NOON OF THIRD DAY AS HAD BEEN CONVENIENT IN SOME YEARS PAST. CHANGING FOCUS OF DISCUSSION, GERMAN DEL ASKED ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF HOLDING OECD MINISTERIAL BACK-TO-BACK WITH MARSHALL PLAN COMMEMORATION NOW SET FOR JUNE 2-3 (REFS B AND C). SECGEN OBVIOUSLY NOT ENTHUSIASTIC OVER TIMING OF THIS ARRANGEMENT SAYING MARSHALL PLAN COMMEMORATION HAD NOT ORIGINALLY BEEN SET UP TO BE MINISTERIAL MEETING.

3. ACTION REQUESTED: WE UNDERSTANDING THESE TWO OPTIONS ARE BEING PUT TO SECRETARIES VANCE AND BLUMENTHAL WITH A RECOMMENDATION THAT THEY CHOOSE THE JUNE 22-24 SPAN. CONSENSUS IS BUILDING UP RAPIDLY ON THESE DATES AND WE NEED URGENTLY AN EXPRESSION OF PREFERENCE FROM WASHINGTON. TURNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING AGENDA, ITINERARY, MINISTERIAL MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 01-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977OECDP06056
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770070-0531
Format: TEL
From: OECD PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197703105/aaaadox.f.tel
Line Count: 87
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 5cfe27ad-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 OECD PARIS 4810, 77 OECD PARIS 4012, 77 OECD PARIS 5300
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2950737
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TIMING OF OECD MINISTERIAL
TAGS: ECON, OECD
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5cfe27ad-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009